

Going AWOL

April 28, 2019



Open: What's one place in the world you'd never want to go—and why?

Read: Jonah 1:1-3

Discuss:

1. In verse 2 God gives three commands to Jonah. What are they? **Read Matthew 28:18-20.** What are the similarities and differences between God's command to Jonah in Jonah 1:2 and Jesus' command to us in Matthew 28:18-20?
2. In verses 2-3, where do you see evidence of intentional disobedience on the part of Jonah? What do you think Jonah was trying to accomplish by seeking "to flee...from the presence of the LORD" (vv. 2)?
3. While we might think Jonah was foolish in his attempts to flee from God, what are some commands of God that we might be inclined to resist? How do we attempt to flee from God?
4. The Ninevites were known for their evil ways and harsh forms of torture. In Jonah's day, they were also Israel's most feared enemy. **Read ahead to Jonah 4:1-2.** According to Jonah, why did he flee? What did he think might happen to Nineveh, and why was this so upsetting to him? Have you ever had a similar reaction? Explain.
5. **Read Genesis 12:1-3.** While it might seem understandable for Jonah to wish harm on his nation's enemies, from God's words to Abram, what was God's primary purpose for Israel among the nations? What should Jonah have wanted for Nineveh?
6. Who are some people or people groups that we in the American church are inclined to think ill of? Are there groups or people who might think Christians view them as enemies? How can we make sure that we have a desire like God's desire for them and not an attitude like Jonah had?
7. Why is it significant that Jonah's story doesn't end at verse 3? What does this tell us about the character of God? What should this mean for our lives?

Apply: Is there an area where you're resisting God that you need to repent of?

Pray: Pray that we would be people who joyfully obey all of God's commands—especially his command to go and bless all people groups by making disciples of all nations.

Jonah 1:1-3

¹ Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, ² "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me." ³ But Jonah rose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. So he paid the fare and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the LORD. (ESV)

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (ESV)

Jonah 4:1-2

¹ But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. ² And he prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. (ESV)

Genesis 12:1-3

¹ Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (ESV)